



Handling the delays in a project schedule (Part I)

By Laura Rose, CTACC

Certified Business Coach and Corporate Exit Strategist

Last week I was taping a series of lectures for the Sequel Server World Wide User Group (SSWUG.org), and I was asked “how does a project manager intelligently handle delays?”

This is an interesting question, because every project will have speed bumps. A good project manager expects speed-bumps and actually plans for the unexpected. So – how does one do this intelligently to synchronize with the final delivery dates?

There are several tools in the good project manager’s arsenal:

- 1) Acknowledging the natural ebb and flow of a project
- 2) Recovery Protocol
- 3) Critical Path Analysis

My next three articles will cover some high-level points of the above:

Acknowledging the natural ebb and flows:

Acknowledging the natural ebb and flows, the peaks and valleys, and the seasons of every endeavor is the first step. Since every project in the past has had problems or issues that have temporarily derailed the plan, there is no reason to believe that your next project won’t have something unexpected occur. This recognition is a power tool. If you can recognize and acknowledge this, you can plan ahead and manage it.

Some examples:



The development team on Project A is hitting a road block. Although the development team is doing everything they can to resolve the issue, the test team is waiting on code to test; and the documentation team has nothing to write about. Others developers are waiting for this feature or library function to continue their work. This issue has become a roadblock for everyone on the team. And as everyone is

waiting, the project time clock is still ticking. How does the project manager stay on schedule?

The good project manager will have a recovery plan already in mind. He will move some isolated “later” scheduled items up on the schedule. For instance:

- 1) Even though there isn't any code to test, the testers can be building the system test lab.
- 2) Developers not working on the problem can be working on the backlog of defects.
- 3) The testers can be assisting developers with their unit testing or on the backlog of defects.
- 4) Documentation team can be writing user case test scenarios, which can be later be used in their User Manuals.
- 5) Testers can assist with the test-driven development features.

Conclusion:

A good project manager doesn't try to control a project. A good project manager adapts and manages the natural flow of things. The trick isn't to stay on track. That is pretty much an impossible request. The skill is to seamlessly get back on track when we wax and wane.

The next feature will cover the idea of a recovery protocol chart.

About Laura Lee Rose



Laura Lee Rose has been in the software and testing industry for over 20 years. She's worked with such companies as IBM, Ericsson, Staples, Fidelity Investments and Sogeti in various client advocacy and project management roles. The techniques she used in her business coaching and client advocacy work saved these companies both time and money, which resulted in on-time, quality product delivery with higher client satisfaction.

Even though Laura excelled in the corporate environment, she felt a calling toward something more. Laura now uses her time management, work life balance and personal development skills as a life coach and Corporate Exit Strategist. Laura Lee Rose helps people blend their goals and dreams into their everyday lives. Laura uses creative transition strategies to help her clients realize what really matters to them. Combining inspired action with practical, tangible techniques easily lead you toward more autonomy, freedom and balance.

If you are ready for your next chapter, learn more about Laura and her products at www.LauraLeeRose.com